Amendments to the Claims:

This listing will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (previously presented) Method for transforming plant cells by introducing a heterologous gene into said plant cells with a gene for tolerance to HPPD inhibitors as a selection marker, said method comprising the steps of:

a) preparing and culturing competent plant cells capable of receiving the heterologous gene and selection marker in a suitable medium, wherein said competent plant cells are embryogenic calluses or embryogenic tissues,

b) bleaching the competent plant cells by introducing a suitable amount of HPPD inhibitor into the suitable culture medium of the competent plant cells,

c) transforming the competent cells with the heterologous gene and the selection marker,

d) growing and selecting the transformed cells comprising the heterologous gene and the selection marker in a suitable medium wherein transformed cells appear green indicating the presence in the transformed cells of the heterologous gene and selection marker,

wherein said gene for tolerance to HPPD inhibitors comprises, in the direction of transcription, a regulatory promoter sequence which is functional in plant cells and plants, functionally linked to a DNA sequence encoding an HPPD, functionally linked to a regulatory terminator sequence which is functional in plant cells and plants.

Claim 2. (previously presented) Method for preparing transgenic plants comprising a heterologous gene integrated into their genome, comprising a method for transforming plant cells according to Claim 1, and further comprising the following steps of :

e) regenerating plants from the transformed cells selected in one or more suitable media and, where appropriate,

f) producing and recovering seeds of the fertile transformed plants, said seeds comprising the heterologous gene and the selection marker.

Claim 3. (original) Method according to Claim 2, characterized in that the transgenic plants produced using the method according to the invention are fertile transgenic plants.

Claim 4. (original) Method according to Claim 1, characterized in that the plant cells are chosen from the cells of dicotyledonous plants.

Claim 5. (original) Method according to Claim 4, characterized in that the plant cells are soya bean cells.

Claim 6. (canceled)

Claim 7. (currently amended) Method according to Claim 1, characterized in that the ~~proliferating embryonic tissues are maintained in a semi-solid medium~~ competent plant cells are proliferating embryogenic tissues.

Claim 8. (original) Method according to Claim 7, characterized in that the proliferating embryonic tissues are maintained in a semi-solid medium.

Claim 9. (original) Method according to Claim 8, characterized in that the semi-solid medium is an FNL medium.

Claim 10. (previously presented) Method according to Claim 1, characterized in that the HPPD inhibitor is chosen from isoxazoles, diketonitriles, triketones, and pyrazolinates.

Claim 11. (previously presented) Method according to Claim 10, characterized in that the concentration of HPPD inhibitors is between 0.5 mg/ml and 50 mg/ml.

Claim 12. (previously presented) Method for preparing transgenic plants comprising a heterologous gene integrated into their genome, which method comprises a method for transforming plant cells by introducing a heterologous gene into said plant cells with a gene for tolerance to HPPD inhibitors as a selection marker, said method comprising the steps of:

a) preparing and culturing competent plant cells capable of receiving the heterologous gene and the selection marker in a suitable medium,

b) bleaching the competent plant cells by introducing a suitable amount of HPPD inhibitor into the suitable culture medium of the competent plant cells,

c) transforming the competent cells with the heterologous gene and the selection marker,

d) growing and selecting the transformed cells comprising the heterologous gene and the selection marker in a suitable medium wherein transformed cells appear green indicating the presence in the transformed cells of the heterologous gene and selection marker,

e) regenerating plants from the transformed cells selected in one or more suitable media and, where appropriate,

f) producing and recovering seeds of the fertile transformed plants, said seeds comprising the heterologous gene and the selection marker, then producing novel varieties of transgenic plants which have stably integrated the heterologous gene into their genome, in conventional selection programmes,

wherein said gene for tolerance to HPPD inhibitors comprises, in the direction of transcription, a regulatory promoter sequence which is functional in plant cells and plants, functionally linked to a DNA sequence encoding an HPPD, functionally linked to a regulatory terminator sequence which is functional in plant cells and plants.

Claim 13. (previously presented) Method according to claim 2, characterized in that the selection marker gene is eliminated by crossing the transformed plants comprising the heterologous gene and the selection marker gene with a nontransformed variety of the same plant.

Claim 14. (previously presented) Method according to claim 4, characterized in that the plant cells are chosen from the cells of tobacco, rapeseed, sugar beet, potatoes, cotton and soya bean.

Claim 15. (previously presented) Method according to claim10, characterized in that the HPPD inhibitor is isoxaflutole.

Claim 16. (previously presented) Method according to claim 10, characterized in that the HPPD inhibitor is 2-cyano-3-cyclopropyl-1-1(2-CH3SO2-4-CF3 phenyl)propan-1,3-dione or 2-cyano-3-cyclopropyl1-1-(2-CH3SO2-4-2-C12 phenyl)propan-1,3-dione.

Claim 17. (previously presented) Method according to claim 10, characterized in that the HPPD inhibitor is sulcotrione or mesotrione.

Claim 18. (previously presented) Method according to claim 11, characterized in that the concentration of inhibitors is between 1 mg/ml and 10 mg/ml.